

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (withdrawn) A method of curing a hose length on a mandrel, the hose length comprising at least one layer of vulcanizable material, the method comprising the step of inserting the hose length onto the mandrel and curing the hose, the method being characterized by:

the mandrel comprising a pair of extending legs wherein at least one of the mandrel legs has a curved portion and

inserting the hose length onto the mandrel by inserting a first hose end onto one mandrel leg and then inserting a second hose end onto the second mandrel leg.

Claim 2 (withdrawn) A method of forming a hose in accordance with claim 1, the method further including the step of, prior to inserting the hose length onto the mandrel, partially curing the hose length.

Claim 3 (withdrawn) A method of forming a hose in accordance with claim 1 wherein the hose length is comprised of at least two layers of a vulcanizable material, and the method is further comprised of, prior to inserting the hose length onto the mandrel, partially curing the hose length to a degree sufficient to promote adhesion between the material layers.

Claim 4 (withdrawn) A method of forming a hose in accordance with claim 1 including the step of, prior to inserting the second opposing end of the hose length onto the second mandrel leg, twisting the hose length to form a loop in the hose length.

Claim 5 (withdrawn) A method of forming a hose in accordance with claim 1 wherein the mandrel has a hollow tube located between the ends of the mandrel legs, and the method includes the step of, prior to inserting the second hose end onto the second mandrel leg, placing the hose into the hollow tube.

Claim 6 (canceled)

Claim 7 (currently amended) A mandrel for forming a hose, the mandrel being characterized by a pair of opposing legs having free ends configured for location within opposite respective

ends of a hose to shape the ends from an original external geometrical configuration into an altered external geometrical configuration, and ~~wherein both legs have a curved portion~~ each leg having an opposite end received within opposite respective ends of a tubular connective member extending between the leg opposite ends.

Claim 8 (currently amended) A mandrel for forming a hose, the mandrel being characterized by a pair of opposing legs, each having first free ends and second connected ends, the first free ends of the opposing legs being configured for simultaneous location within opposite respective ends of a hose to shape the ends from an original external geometrical configuration into an altered external geometrical configuration, and wherein at least one of the mandrel legs has a curved portion and wherein the mandrel is further comprised of a hollow tube located between and receiving in opposite tube ends the second free ends of the opposing legs.

Claim 9 (currently amended) A mandrel for forming a hose, the mandrel being characterized by a pair of opposed legs having first free ends configured for location within opposite respective ends of a hose to shape the ends from an original external geometrical configuration into an altered external geometrical configuration, and wherein at least one of the mandrel legs has a curved portion and wherein the mandrel is further comprised of a base rod onto having opposite rod ends to which the opposing legs are secured at opposite leg ends, and at least one opposite end of the legs is threaded onto to one said rod end the base rod such that the one leg independently adjusts a separation distance between the one leg and the opposite leg and the one leg independently laterally rotates about the one rod end to adjust ~~adjusts~~ a rotational position of the one leg relative to the opposite leg.

Claim 10 (previously presented) A mandrel in accordance with claim 9 wherein both legs are threaded onto the base rod such that each leg independently adjusts a separation distance between the legs and each leg independently adjusts a rotational position of the leg relative to the opposite leg.

Claim 11-14 (canceled)

Claim 15 (currently amended) A mandrel for forming a hose, the mandrel being

characterized by a pair of opposed hose-shaping legs having first free ends configured for receipt within opposite respective ends of a hose, and further comprised of a connective member connecting second ends of the opposing legs and including adjustment means for altering laterally the angular relationship and separation distance of at least one opposing leg relative to the opposite opposing leg and wherein the connective member comprises an elongate bar extending between and supported by the second ends of the opposing legs.

Claim 16 (currently amended) A mandrel for forming a hose, the mandrel being characterized by a pair of opposed hose-shaping legs having first free ends configured for receipt within opposite respective ends of a hose, and further comprised of a connective member connecting second ends of the opposing legs and including adjustment means for altering the separation distance and lateral rotational relationship between at least one opposing leg and the opposite opposing leg and wherein the adjustment means comprises a threaded connection between at least one leg second end and a connective member end ~~the connective member~~ allowing the at least one leg second end to rotate about the connective member end.

Claim 17 (currently amended) A mandrel according to claim 16, wherein a threaded connection attaches the second ends of both legs to the connective member whereby each leg independently adjusts the separation distance and rotational relationship between the opposed legs.

Claim 18 (canceled)

Claim 19 (new) A mandrel according to claim 16, wherein the one opposing leg is rotationally adjustable laterally relative to the opposing leg substantially three hundred and sixty degrees.